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2 December 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Soviet Efforts to Recruit Workers to Siberia

The attached was requested by Jesse Clear, Department of State, EUR/P and describes the demographic environment in Siberia and Soviet efforts to recruit people to work there. The memo is part of an interagency investigation on forced labor in the USSR requested by Congress (HR. 449).

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Date

MAR 1983

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SUBJECT: Soviet Efforts to Recruit Workers to Siberia

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Contribution to final report for
U.S. Congress re House Res. 449

[REDACTED]

1 December 1982

Soviet Efforts to Recruit Workers to Siberia

Siberia has always been sparsely populated. Despite the vigorous attempts made by both the Imperial and Communist governments to settle it during the 19th and 20th centuries, the region continues to be characterized by low population density. Siberia includes about 30 percent of the territory of the USSR, but in 1979 only 8 percent of the total population lived there. Even more striking, the Far Eastern region which occupies another 28 percent of the country's territory, contained only 2.5 percent of the population. There has been a substantial increase in the number of people living in these areas since 1939, but because of population growth elsewhere, the increase in the proportion of the Soviet population living in Siberia and the Far East has been negligible.

The natural increase in Siberia's population has not been sufficient to meet the area's manpower needs, and these deficiencies can only be made up through migration. But if the area's experience to date is any guide to the future, it will be

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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extremely difficult to attract and retain enough workers to satisfy the planners. For example, in Tyumen' Oblast where energy development is concentrated, the population of 3 administrative sub-units almost quadrupled since 1959, growing from one-tenth to one-fourth of West Siberia's total. This massive influx does not, however, represent permanent or even long-term settlement. About 80 percent of the in-migrants to Tyumen' Oblast during 1965-75 left, and the exodus is said to be continuing at about the same rate.

Incentive Program

For more than 50 years the Soviet government has provided financial and other incentives to recruit workers to Siberia. Extra benefits for those willing to work in the northern regions were first made available by a 1932 decree for a "northern increment" to regular wages, longer annual leave, increased pension rights and certain privileges in housing and education. Wages were set 20-30 percent higher than the level prevailing in the European portions of the USSR. Other benefits included income tax exemptions for 5-10 years, free food and seed, home-building loans and the like. Despite the government's efforts, by 1959 it was found that the West-to-East resettlement program was not very successful. The number of those leaving Siberia was greater than the number moving in.

A 1960 decree abolished the existing wage differentials, reducing benefits available to those thinking of moving to Siberia and to those already working there. This measure proved to be a mistake as it produced a mass exodus of workers;

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

financial incentives to encourage migration were reintroduced by 1967. Further changes in 1969, 1972, 1973 and 1977 increased allocations for wages, pensions and other amenities, extending them to categories of workers not previously covered by the benefits, and making them applicable to all parts of Siberia and the Far East.

Those who leave for work in Siberia try to conclude contracts with particular establishments in advance, since in this case the law provides special benefits. Fundamental benefits include higher wages (1.5-4.0 times the national average), a bonus for signing up, additional payments for seasonal unemployment, additional leave (1.5-2.0 times the national average), and extra time and money once every three years for a round-trip to a "place of rest." Supplementary benefits include special advantages in the calculation of pensions and disability payments, retention of the right to live in one's former place of residence, and payment of expenses (upon expiration of the labor contract or for some other valid reason) for the return trip of the worker and his family to his former place of residence. Agricultural resettlers in certain regions are offered similar incentives as well. (See attached advertisement for pipeline workers in Tyumen' Oblast.)

However, the promise of a better life and higher wages soon collides with the harsh realities of living in Siberia. The extreme weather and isolation, inadequate housing, few social amenities, and high prices for food and consumer goods all contribute to worker dissatisfaction and high turnover.

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[REDACTED]

Other Employment Alternatives

Because of Siberia's huge manpower needs required by the 1981-85 Plan, the Soviets will undoubtedly continue to rely on the traditional incentive approach to recruit workers to Siberia. However, the expense and limited success involved in establishing permanent settlements and the high turnover of workers have prompted the government to experiment with other employment schemes. They will increase the tour-of-duty and expedition methods of employment which rotate short-term workteams from established areas. These methods entail flying workers into northern, makeshift settlements from southern base cities (within Siberia for tour-of-duty method and from European USSR for expedition approach) for a predetermined period and then returning them for rest and recreation before their next tour.

Other sources of labor for work in Siberia include some foreign workers, inmates from labor camps, and some unconfined parolees and probationers. There are, for example, six forced labor camps located in northern West Siberia engaged primarily in manufacturing and light industry. Moreover, it is possible that work by some unconfined forced-labor parolees and probationers may support construction of the six pipelines to built in that region.

[REDACTED] such workers are used regularly in large construction projects--including pipeline compressor stations.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Attachment:

ПРИГЛАШАЕТ НА РАБОТУ

В ТЮМЕНСКОЙ ОБЛАСТИ

Трест «Промтрубопроводстрой»
ПРИГЛАШАЕТ НА РАБОТУ

на строительство магистральных трубопроводов
на территории Тюменской области —
опытные специалисты: дипломированные электро-
сварщики-печеточники, полуавтоматические 6 разряда
для сварки труб диаметром 1020—1420 мм; машинисты
трубоукладчиков 6 разряда (КАТО, КОМАЦУ), машини-
сты гидравлических экскаваторов 30-4121 6 разряда, ма-
шинисты КАТО; машинисты бульдозеров (шпёрты и
отечественных машин), бригадиры слесарей монтажно-
мех 6 разряда, водителей автомашин-платформ МАЗ-643,
КрАЗ-253, дефолтослесари по ультразвуковой дефекто-
логии БТ-361 «Тюмень»; машинисты
трубоукладчиков ТП-302.

специалисты, имеющие соответствующее образование
и опыт работы: главные механики управлений, зам.
начальника, старшего инженера ЦПИ треста, началь-
ников и главных инженеров управлений, заместителей
начальников управлений, механиков РММ, механиков
по импортной технике, мастера-ремонтники, инженеры-
механики, старшие инженеры БУИ треста и управ-
лений.

для работы на трассе по строительству магистральных
трубопроводов: старшие прорабы, прорабы, мастера,
линейные механики по ремонту и эксплуатации стро-
ительной техники, механики по ремонту автомобилей,
мастера и старшие мастера автомашин.

Специалистам, вызванным на работу, выплачивалась
предоставлена в течение 6 месяцев работы — в порядке
очередности, временно — премиально в вагон-термине
или в общежитии.

Районный коэффициент 70 процентов, ежегодная над-
бавка через каждые 5 лет работы — 10 процентов. При
заключении договора на 3 года выплачивается единовремен-
ное пособие в размере двухмесячного оклада, предо-
ставляется дополнительный льготный отпуск один раз
в три года в размере стоимости проезда. Непосредственное
работавшим на трассе выплачивается 40% трассовых,
бронируется жилищная площадь по месту постоянного житель-
ства.

Для решения вопроса трудоустройства необходимо
выслать заграничную копию трудовой книжки, копию
диплома и личный паспорт по месту работы.

Наш адрес: 616604, Тюменская обл., Ханты-Мансийский
автономный округ, Березовский р-н, пос. Игрия,
отдел кадров треста.